

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6303

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, January 22, 1996

Title: An act relating to higher education fiscal matters.

Brief Description: Changing tuition for full-time nonresident undergraduate students at the University of Washington and Washington State University.

Sponsors: Senators Bauer, Sheldon and Prince.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/16/96, 1/22/96 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6303 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chair; Kohl, Vice Chair; Drew, McAuliffe, Rasmussen, Sheldon and Wood.

Staff: Jennifer Hanlon (786-7784)

Background: Before 1995, tuition was fixed in statute as a percentage of the instructional cost at each institution. The Higher Education Coordinating Board determined the cost of instruction by an educational cost study. The cost study established an average instructional cost based on support from the Legislature. Thus, when state general fund support decreased, so did the amount of tuition. In 1995, the Legislature decided that the educational cost study would no longer drive tuition. Instead, the Legislature increased tuition by 4 percent per year for the 1995-96 and 1996-97 academic years.

Currently, tuition for nonresident undergraduates at the University of Washington and Washington State University is lower than nonresident undergraduate tuition at peer institutions.

Summary of Substitute Bill: For nonresident undergraduates and other nonresident students not in graduate study programs, tuition is \$9,491.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill increased tuition to \$9,755. The substitute bill increases tuition to \$9,491 to reflect a 10 percent increase. This change brings the University of Washington and Washington State University closer to the peer institution's rate for nonresident undergraduate tuition.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There is no need to wait for this increase. The peer institutions are recruiting new faculty and this increase could help make the University of Washington competitive. The president at the University of Washington is committed to using this increase to improve undergraduate education programs. This increase could also be helpful with establishing programs to shorten time-to-degree. This is less than the original tuition increase proposal.

Testimony Against: Although the increase is 10 percent rather than 20 percent, it still impacts students adversely. Students would rather see a grandfather clause in the bill to exempt current students.

Testified: Sherry Burkey, University of Washington; Garrick Hileman, University of Washington.